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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; August 10, 2009

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DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

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Hyun Jeong-eun, chairwoman of Hyundai Group, is scheduled to visit  
North Korea today to negotiate the release of a Hyundai Asan  
employee who has been detained in the North since March 30. There

is a possibility that she may meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. (All)

An ROKG official speculated that the worker is likely to be released before the August 15 Liberation Day. (Chosun, JoongAng, Hankook)

#### INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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According to the Times of India, an English-language daily newspaper in India, India's coast guard detained a "suspicious" North Korean cargo ship on August 6 after a six-hour chase off the country's southeastern coast and has been investigating the ship ever since. A preliminary search of the vessel revealed that it was carrying no illegal nuclear materials. (All)

According to the August 9 issue of The New York Times, the Obama Administration is likely to focus more on preventing the spread of North Korea's nuclear technology than on dismantling its nuclear program completely. (Chosun)

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, in an August 9 contribution to The Washington Post, stressed the importance of continuing to seek complete dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear program. (Chosun, Segye)

White House National Security Advisor James Jones, in an August 9 interview with Fox News, said that North Korea has signaled that it

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wants to improve relations with the U.S. and that North Korean leader Kim Jong-il seems in full control of the country. (Hankook, Hankyoreh, Segye, Seoul, YTN)

#### MEDIA ANALYSIS

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##### -N. Korea

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Most ROK newspapers on Saturday (August 8) replayed an August 6 ABC News report quoting a USG source briefed on former President Bill Clinton's visit to North Korea as saying that former President Clinton told North Korean leader Kim Jong-il that North Korea's nuclear program will not make that country safer and more secure, but rather will continue to lead to further international isolation.

Most media today quoted White House National Security Advisor James Jones as saying during an August 9 Fox News interview that North Korea has signaled that it wants to improve relations with the U.S. and that North Korean leader Kim Jong-il seems in full control of the country.

All ROK media today gave attention to an August 9 report by the Times of India that India's coast guard detained a "suspicious" North Korean cargo ship on August 6 after a six-hour chase off the country's southeastern coast and has been investigating the ship ever since. According to media reports, a preliminary search of the vessel revealed that it was carrying no illegal nuclear materials. The ROK media noted that this was the first time a foreign country has actually seized a North Korean ship since the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1874 against North Korea in June for its second nuclear test in May.

Conservative Chosun Ilbo gave inside-page play to former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's August 9 contribution to The Washington Post, quoting him as saying: "Speculation is already rife that last week's visit to Pyongyang by former President Bill Clinton brings the prospect of a change of course of American policy and of a bilateral U.S.-North Korea solution. But two-party talks outside the Six-Party framework never made any sense. ... Any outcome other than the elimination of North Korea's nuclear military capability in a fixed time frame is a blow to nonproliferation prospects worldwide and to peace and stability globally."

Chosun Ilbo, in an editorial entitled "U.S. Public Opinion Starts to See through Kim Jong-il Tactics," stated: "The Obama Administration has made it clear that under no circumstances will it recognize North Korea as a nuclear state and repeat the past pattern in which North Korea broke its promises after obtaining profits. Paradoxically, this U.S. principle seems to be strengthening after former President Clinton's meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il."

All ROK media reported today that Hyun Jeong-eun, chairwoman of Hyundai Group, will visit North Korea today to negotiate the release of a Hyundai Asan employee who has been detained in the North since March 30.

Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo, in particular, raised the possibility that she may meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. JoongAng also viewed North Korea's invitation of the chairwoman as having come out of consideration for progressive circles in the ROK, as well as a conciliatory gesture designed to obtain aid from the ROK in order to appease its own citizens.

#### OPINIONS/EDITORIALS

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##### WHY THE U.S. IS KIM JONG-IL'S LAST, BEST HOPE (Chosun Ilbo, August 10, 2009, page 30)

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By Political affairs reporter Kang Chol-hwan

Former U.S. President Bill Clinton's surprise visit to North Korea to win the release of two American journalists went according to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's script. The North used the capture of the two reporters to its utmost advantage, the hostages providing it with an ideal opportunity to lure an eminent American onto its soil just when it became subject to tighter sanctions over its nuclear tests and missile launches from the international community and the U.S. in particular. It was a lucky break of the first order.

The North used former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's visit 15 years ago to bolster the image of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il, and when former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright went to watch the Arirang mass calisthenics performance in Pyongyang, she gave the regime another boost. It is remarkable that the North treats eminent visitors from the U.S., its ostensible archenemy, quite differently from the way it receives leaders from China, its closest and most important ally.

In the past half century, the North has essentially consolidated itself by the sole expedient of anti-Americanism, defining the U.S. as a longstanding enemy. According to North Korean propaganda, America is the great imperial power, desperate to destroy the last bastion of socialism. North Korea alone holds out against it now that the Soviet Union has fallen and China has deserted the cause.

Few North Koreans believe the propaganda any longer. Many among the North Korean privileged classes are beginning to think it is not China but North Korea which has deserted socialism, and some of them question the wisdom of dealing with the U.S. alone over the nuclear issue when they feel it could better be resolved with China. Hwang Jang-yeop, a former Secretary of the North Korean Workers' Party who defected to the ROK, recalls, "I often heard Kim Jong-il slander the Chinese leadership, but never heard him criticize the United States."

The late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping since the early days of China's reform asked the North Korean leadership to change, and former President Jiang Zemin and current President Hu Jintao repeatedly recommended reform. But for Kim Jong-il, change means the end of himself and his system. That is why China, if it asks him to change, becomes in effect the biggest threat.

The Chinese Communist Party, too, sees the Kim Jong-il regime as one that has long escaped socialism through the personality cult and hereditary feudalism, and is sending a message to Pyongyang that it can establish a socialist regime based on a market economy in place of Kim's at any time. Though it fears the emergence of a pro-U.S. regime in the North when the current one goes, China is ready to drop the Kim regime the moment a serious pro-Beijing reform movement emerges.

A sort of farce is being played out whereby the Kim regime, whose survival depends on China, is desperate to win recognition from the U.S. Why does North Korea insist on direct negotiations with Washington while distancing itself from its ally China, which holds all the economic and military keys? The answer lies in the threat called reform and opening.

The essence of all North Korean problems including nuclear, missile, and human rights issues, is the fixation on maintaining the current dictatorship. Expanding trade between the ROK and China as well as China's rapid economic development represent the biggest threats to Kim Jong-il, who, accordingly, believes that nuclear armament is the only way to defend himself. North Korea's groveling reception of Bill Clinton and the release of detained journalists even as a South Korean remains locked up incommunicado at the joint Kaesong Industrial Complex, can be seen not as a diplomatic victory but as the last desperate effort to maintain the regime through hostage taking.

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U.S. PUBLIC OPINION STARTS TO SEE THROUGH KIM JONG-IL TACTICS  
(Chosun Ilbo, August 10, 2009, page 31)

It's been almost a year since news broke that North Korean leader Kim Jong-il collapsed. His illness, an unconfirmed rumor in August last year, has now been confirmed to have involved not only the blood vessels in his brain, but also caused partial paralysis to the left side of his body. Over the past year, Kim hurriedly anointed his 25-year-old (sic) son Kim Jong-un as his successor, to continue hereditary rule in North Korea.

The elder Kim tried to demonstrate his physical health by speaking with former U.S President Bill Clinton for more than three hours, but cerebrovascular diseases have a high probability of a relapse. Some experts already believe Kim Jong-il's brother-in-law and Jong-un's uncle, Chang Sung-taek, a vice director of the Workers' Party, have started managing day-to-day state affairs.

The reason why North Korea test-fired a long-range missile in April and conducted a second nuclear test in May, even before the Obama Administration's North Korea policies took shape, was most likely due to the sense of urgency and crisis triggered by Kim's ailing health. This sense of crisis could have caused North Korea's senior officials to solidify their belief that possessing nuclear weapons was their last chance of survival.

But judging by the latest trend in the international community and the U.S., nuclear weapons may not be the ultimate guarantee of survival for the North Korean regime. The Obama Administration has made it clear that under no circumstances will it recognize North Korea as a nuclear state and repeat the past pattern in which North Korea broke its promises after obtaining profits. Paradoxically, this U.S. principle seems to be strengthening after former President Clinton's meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il.

Influential U.S. media including the New York Times and the Washington Post, which called for a policy of placating North Korea at a time when the George W. Bush Administration went through a hardline phase, are now saying that their government must not waver in sanctions against the North following Clinton's visit. "Over the last 15 years, North Korea has cajoled the countries involved in the Six-Party Talks," the Washington Post recalls. Congress is also united in its stance toward North Korea. The country has rarely been as united in its position over the North Korean nuclear dilemma.

During recent strategic talks with Washington, Beijing voiced fears of a nuclear arms race in Northeast Asia. It was a clear warning that it will not accept a nuclear-armed North Korea. China may not immediately restrain North Korea, but nobody can say for sure whether the present relationship between Beijing and Pyongyang will last forever.

The North Korean nuclear problem must be resolved by Kim Jong-il himself. After his death, North Korea may face a leadership vacuum and be left with nobody to handle the problem. Seoul needs to come up with a strategy of convincing North Korea that it can survive without nuclear weapons. From a long-term perspective, such efforts dovetail with the ROK's preparations for reunification with North Korea. There is not much time left for both sides.

URGING DEMOCRACY IN NORTH KOREA  
(Dong-a Ilbo, August 10, 2009, page 27)

Hwang Jang-yeop, former secretary of the North Korean Workers' Party and once the No. 2 man in Pyongyang's power hierarchy, has begun urging democracy and reform in the North. Hwang, who defected to the ROK 12 years ago, visited the Dong-A Ilbo's headquarters Friday. It was his first visit to a media office since his arrival in the ROK. He told reporters about the human rights situation in the North, its leader Kim Jong-il's diplomatic strategy and countermeasures against it. Hwang's comments deserve close attention in that he knows both Koreas well.

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Hwang called the North's communist regime "a traitor government that starved millions of its people to death, turned the whole country into a prison camp, and forced countless of North Korean defectors to die violent deaths abroad." He said he learned from a briefing by a high-ranking North Korean official that 500,000 North Koreans, including 50,000 members of the Workers' Party, died from hunger in 1995, while one million starved to death in the first 11 months of the following year. Hwang's comment corroborates the rumor that 3.5 million North Koreans starved to death in the famine.

Though more than 10 percent of the North's 24 million people died from hunger, Kim apparently feels no pang of conscience and shirks responsibility for this atrocity. The North's second nuclear explosion and long-range missile tests conducted this year resulted in the suspension of international food aid, adding to the suffering of the North Korean people. The U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization warns that more than six million North Koreans will experience a food shortage until harvest season. If no action is taken, a large number of people will die from hunger. Turning a blind eye to the suffering of his people and those who fled the country, Kim is instead focusing on transferring power to his son.

To save North Koreans, who are "our people in a non-liberated place," Hwang said the international community must distance itself from the North while pretending to respect it. By doing so, he said, the North can be isolated from the global community politically, ideologically and economically. He also criticized pro-North Korea groups in the ROK for unilaterally urging Seoul to resume talks with Pyongyang while blaming their government for strained inter-Korean relations. Hwang urged the need for non-governmental organizations and North Korean defectors to lead the movement to install democracy in the North.

In August last year, the Lee Myung-bak Administration of the ROK allowed Hwang to travel abroad, write books, and give lectures. Because of this, he can now express his opinions, something that he never could have thought of doing under the two previous left-leaning governments in Seoul.

FEATURES

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MANY "HOLES" FOUND IN WEST PROGRAM

(Segye Ilbo, August 8, 2009, Front Page)

By Reporter Na Ki-chun from Washington

The first group of about 180 WEST participants has encountered difficulty... raising concerns about damage done to them.

Participants have difficulty getting an internship, and even if they are employed, many of the internships are unpaid jobs.

Since participants do not have a written contract, they cannot make a complaint about possible unfair treatment.

There is growing concern that the ROKG's "global internship" program, ambitiously designed to nurture global young leaders, may only frustrate young people.

The first group of about 180 participants in the WEST (Work, English Study, Travel) Program, who left the nation this past March, are running into various problems. One of the participants was dropped mid-program, and it has taken more than a month before participants get internships after finishing their language courses. Since participants do not have a written contract, it is difficult for them to make a complaint to local sponsors even if they receive unfair treatment.

Observers point out that in addition to the roughly 150 participants who are going to join the program this month, up to 5,000 participants, who will be selected for the program every year

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starting in 2010, may face the same problems.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said on August 7 that among the first batch of the participants, 46 people finished their language courses and entered an internship. But most of them had been anxious about getting an internship for over a month, and one is still seeking an internship. The situation, however, is expected to become worse when 136 people, a majority of the first participants, finish their five-month language programs at the end of this month and start to seek an internship.

As WEST participants have difficulty getting internships amid the U.S. economic downturn, the foreign ministry, through ROK missions in the U.S., is encouraging Korean businesses in the U.S. to hire them. Considering that Korean companies rarely use English, the WEST Program is losing its original purpose of teaching students English and local culture while working in the U.S.

The ROKG (initially) said that WEST participants will work as paid interns and their salary as interns will be able to cover the participation fee (8,300-8,400 dollars) and the costs of stay. However, 25% of the employed participants are working unpaid. A local sponsor recently sent an email to the program participants, saying that U.S. companies cannot afford to have paid interns, hiring only unpaid interns.

A WEST participant who began an internship last month said, "I expect to receive housing assistance and a monthly 500 dollars but am worried about (my) sponsor's position because it cannot guarantee it for them." If the internship is not paid, the participants will likely pay 30 million won annually, which covers the participation fee, airfare, housing and living expenses.

Also, the participants had no contract when they left (to the U.S.), and their status and activities in the U.S depend totally on the sponsors. This makes it difficult for participants to plead any unfair treatment. Recently, a participant had a visa cancelled because of an alleged absence from the language program class. This further fuelled concerns among the participants. The participant criticized it as a retaliatory act, which came after openly protesting the sponsor's unfair work process. Now, the participant has applied for a change of visa status.

An Jin-geol, Director of People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy said that the ROKG sent the youths to the U.S. without

fully laying out plans for the program, thus potentially making them feel frustrated. The ROKG should thoroughly check the problems rather than exaggerate the effects of the program.

STEPHENS